

Yokohama Unveils PoC Support Program to Propel International Startups in Japan

Yokohama's new program, open until mid-August, provides international startups an expedited path into the Japanese market through PoC support and matching.

YOKOHAMA, JAPAN, July 1, 2024
/EINPresswire.com/ -- In a strategic move to bolster the entry of international startups into the

Japanese market, Yokohama City has launched the "Technical Startup Demonstration Experiment Support Program," also known as the Yokohama PoC Support Program. This innovative initiative aims to streamline the process for startups by offering them a platform to conduct Proof of Concept (PoC) demonstration experiments in collaboration with Yokohama City and its partners, significantly easing their market entry and operational challenges.

Yokohama City's new PoC Support Program is specifically designed to help startups overcome some of the challenges that startups can face in entering a new international market like Japan's. By providing a structured environment for PoC experiments, the program offers several advantages:

- **Field Coordination:** Startups receive comprehensive support to coordinate their on-the-ground PoCs and tech demonstrations in Yokohama, ensuring that logistical and operational needs are attended to.
- **Prototype Development and Partner Matching:** The program facilitates connections with local partners and support for prototype development, allowing startups to tailor their products to the Japanese market and receive a jumpstart in connecting with potential business partners.
- **Trial Implementation:** Startups can implement trials in a real-world environment, gaining valuable insights and feedback from local stakeholders.
- **Post-PoC support:** Startups can receive free consultation support on future business development plans in Japan after the PoC has concluded.

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- PR Support: The backing of Yokohama City itself and its partners means that participating startups can receive a wide range of publicity support through various local channels, helping startups find traction without having to spend on advertising.

PoC experiments are a vital step for technological startups entering new markets. They allow companies to validate product-market fit, determine if their product or service meets the local market's needs, and make necessary adjustments. Conducting a PoC also helps startups mitigate risk by identifying potential issues early and making necessary adjustments before a full-scale launch, and successfully completing a PoC in collaboration with local partners enhances a startup's reputation and credibility in the new market. This is especially crucial in Japan, where trust is paramount in business partnerships.

Yokohama's PoC Support Program is open to international startups that meet the following criteria:

- Intention to establish an office in Yokohama: Participants must be interested in the Japanese market and open to considering Yokohama as their base in Japan.
- Developing products/services based on advanced, unique technologies: Since this program focuses on technology demonstration experiments, Yokohama and its partners are looking for companies with exciting, innovative tech.
- Proposed projects to be conducted in Yokohama or in collaboration with domestic partners: All this requires of startups is the understanding that the PoCs will be held in Yokohama, as opposed to other areas in Japan.
- Incorporated for less than 15 years: Yokohama is looking to support the startups that need it, so applicant companies must be reasonably young.

Some examples of industries that are listed as being a good fit for the program include: Advanced Mobility, Cleantech and Green Transformation, AI, Robotics, Electronics, Semiconductors, Quantum, Biotechnology, Medical Devices, New Materials, Energy, Environment, Aerospace, etc.

The PoC Support Program, newly launched in June 2024, is available for a limited time: The application period runs from June 3, 2024, to August 16, 2024. Once the application process ends and companies are selected, the main period of the program which includes the PoCs and business matching extends from early October 2024 to late February 2025. Post-PoC report submission is due in March 2025.

Interested startups can apply by contacting ke-poc-admin@hml.nttdata.co.jp. The [official program page](#) provides details on the required application materials, and a preliminary

consultation will assist in submitting the necessary files.

Yokohama [stands out as a business destination](#) due to its robust support infrastructure for startups. The city has initiated a series of efforts to support startups, including the YOXO BOX startup support center and a recent [startup visa program](#). Yokohama is the second most populous city in Japan and directly a part of the Greater Tokyo Metropolitan Area. It is a powerhouse for research and development with a wealth of local talent. One of the most international cities in Japan, Yokohama offers a high quality of life, especially for international workers entering the city.

Yokohama's Technical Startup Demonstration Experiment Support Program offers a unique opportunity for startups aiming to expand into Japan. By leveraging the resources and support provided by the City of Yokohama and its partners, startups can navigate the complexities of international expansion and establish a strong presence in Japan's dynamic market. Apply now to accelerate your growth and innovation in Japan's thriving technological landscape.

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